

Message Text

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60

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DOTE-00 FEA-01

INT-05 OES-03 /105 W

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R 211045Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2079

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ELTN, ETRD, EALR, TU, IR

SUBJECT: IMPACT OF TURKISH TIR ROAD TRANSIT FEE INCREASE

REF: (A) ANKARA 0327, (B) DAMASCUS 0264

1. NEW TURKISH DECREE RAISING TRANSIT FEES ON TIR TRUCKS HAS BEEN IN EFFECT TWO WEEKS AND IT IS INCREASINGLY EVIDENT THAT GOT DOES NOT INTEND TO BACK DOWN FROM ORIGINAL FEE INCREASE. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER FEYZIOGLU, IN A SPECIAL PRESS CONFERENCE, STATE THAT THE RATE INCREASE WAS LONG OVERDUE AND THAT THE TURKISH TAXPAYER COULD NO LONGER BE ASKED TO SUBSIDIZE THE FLOW OF GOODS FROM THE INDUSTRIALIZED WEST TO WEALTHY OPEC STATES.

2. INCREASE OF COURSE PRIMARILY AFFECTS IRAN AS WELL AS
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COUNTRIES HAVING MAJOR EAST AND WEST EUROPEAN TRUCKING

LINES. INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT UNION (IRU) HAS REPORTEDLY SENT REPRESENTATIVES TO ANKARA TO DISCUSS IMPLICATIONS OF SHARPLY HIGHER FEES AND THE SUDDEN IMPOSITION OF DECREE. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL HAS TOLD US THAT GOT HAS COME UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM IRU, FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND TURKISH TRUCKING LINES IN REGARD TO NEW SCHEDULE AND HASTE WITH WHICH IT WAS IMPLEMENTED. FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES ADDED THAT WHILE IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE POLITICALLY TO CHANGE SUBSTANCE OF DECREE, FOR ALL PRACTICABLE PURPOSES ALL TRUCKS WILL PAY 25 KURUS RATHER THAN 40 KURUS RATES. BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH COUNTRIES CONCERNED WILL THEN CENTER ON SPECIAL CONCESSIONS OR BPMDS THAT GOT HAS OR IS WILLING TO GIVE TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES.

3. TURKISH PRESS REPORTS AND FOREIGN MINISTRY CONFIRMS THAT IRAN AND TURKEY ARE WORKING ON A TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENT

TO PERMIT IRAN TO BENEFIT FROM LOWER RATES APPLIED TO AGREEMENT COUNTRIES UNTIL A MORE WIDE-RANGING TRANSIT AGREEMENT CAN BE SIGNED. IN ORDER TO KEEP TIR TRAFFIC MOVING AND PREVENT BORDER JAM-UPS, GOT HAS ALSO INITIATED TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRUCK OWNERS AND DRIVERS TO USE BONDS AND LETTERS OF GUARANTEE FOR TIR TRANSIT FEES.

4. U.S. FIRMS ARE GENERALLY NOT AFFECTED EXCEPT IN CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY MAY BE A PARTY TO A CONTRACT EITHER AS A SUPPLIER OR FORWARDER FOR DELIVERY OF GOODS INVOLVING ROAD TRANSPORT ACROSS TURKEY IN WHICH THE COST OF SUCH TRANSIT WAS INCLUDED IN THE AGREED PRICE UNDER THE CONTRACT. IN SUCH CASE, THE U.S. FIRM WOULD PRESUMABLY HAVE TO ABSORB THE HIGHER TRANSIT CHARGE. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE UNDERSTAND THAT BOTH AMERICAN EXPORT LINES AND PRUDENTIAL HAVE GOODS OFF-LOADED AT IZMIR AND ISKENDERUN FOR TRANSIT TO IRAN. AMERICAN EXPORT LINES ESTIMATES ON THE PRELIMINARY BASIS THAT ITS AND PRUDENTIAL'S POTENTIAL LIABILITY IN THIS CASE COULD BE (80,000 UNLESS CONTRACTS WITH IRANIAN IMPORTERS CAN BE RE-NEGOTIATED OR RELIEF OBTAINED FROM GOT. AMERICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPORT LINES HAS NOT FORMALLY ASKED FOR EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, ALTHOUGH THE COMPANY ITSELF HAS HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS.

5. REFERENCE DAMASCUS 0264. FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS INFORMED US THAT DENMARK, GREECE, WEST GERMANY, AUSTRIA AND ITALY ALL HAVE TRANSIT AGREEMENTS WITH TURKEY. MACOMBER

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